

6.11.22 am

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Date: 06 November 2022

[0 : 00] Good morning everybody and welcome to our service this morning. It's a great pleasure to have Jeff Townend of the Faith Mission with us this morning. He's visiting here with Donnie McLeod this weekend.

And Jeff will actually be taking over from Donnie in the new year when Donnie retires. So we welcome Jeff today and pray for God's blessing upon his ministry.

At the close of the service, tea and coffee are served and everybody is welcome to that, especially any visitors who might be with us today. And in the evening service at 6pm will be taken by Donnie.

And after that there will be a fellowship at 7.30pm which Donnie and Jeff will lead. Ladies' Fellowship meets tomorrow as usual at 8pm. Before I forget, just a reminder to all the elders that the elders will meet for prayer at 7pm here in the church tomorrow night.

Then the Ladies' Fellowship meets at 8pm. Little Fishers as usual meets on Tuesday morning at 10pm. And Road to Recovery on Tuesday evening at 7pm. And then the prayer meeting will be held in person here and on Zoom on Wednesday night at 7.30pm.

[1 : 16] The Friday clubs for young people meeting at their normal times. And a special note to folk, just ask if you can be seated early next week because it's Remembrance Sunday.

So if you can be in the church for 10.50pm that would be much appreciated. And then the evening service will be at 6pm as usual. And I think there's a congregational meal planned for the Thursday the 24th of November.

More details to follow on that. So these are all the intimations. And we pray for God's blessing upon Jeff and upon us now as we worship him.

Thank you, Jeff. Well, good morning. It's great to be with you this morning. And thanks for the warm welcome, Duncan. I want to start our service this morning by singing from Psalm 97.

The first verse of Psalm 97 from St. Psalm says, The Lord reigns. Let the earth be glad. Let distant shores express delight. And verses 8 and 9 say, To Zion hill and Judah's towns, your judgments, Lord, great joy supply.

[2 : 26] Above the earth and all the gods exalted is the Lord most high. That's why we're gathered here this morning. Is to exalt the Lord's name. And to sing his praises.

So let's stand and sing Psalm 97 verses 1 through to 9. The Lord reigns.

Let the earth be glad. Let distant shores express delight.

Clouds and thick darkness color him. His throne is built on truth and right.

Fire goes before him and consumes. His enemies on every side.

[3 : 42] His lightning flashes through the world. At this the earth is terrified.

Hells melt like wax before the Lord. Before the Lord upon the earth.

The hands proclaim the righteousness. All people see his glorious worth.

All those who worship images. Are put to everlasting shame.

Their worthless idols are their foes. Here God's bow down before his name.

- [5 : 08] To Zion hill and Judah's towns. Your judgments Lord great joy supply.
above the earth and all the gods. Exalted is the Lord most high.
- Let's begin our service with a word of prayer. Dear Father we do thank you for the words that we have been singing.
- We thank you this morning that we do not come to a dead God. As many other people in other religions. Bow the knee to dead gods and to pieces of wood and stone.
- We thank you this morning that as we come to you. We don't come to a dead God. But we come to the living God. Who is exalted upon the throne.
- [6 : 24] It's high and lifted up. And so we thank you this morning that we can come to this living God. Lord we thank you so much that although you are a living and a powerful God.
- You're not a distant God. We thank you that through your son and the work he has done upon the cross. That we have been brought back into a relationship with you the living God.
- That we might come before you. And say Abba Father. And Lord we just give thanks so much. That all this has been made possible through the death and resurrection.
- Of Christ. That through your great mercy you have caused us to be born again. To a living hope. Through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- And so Lord we thank you for that this morning. We thank you that we can be brought into this relationship of yourself. And Lord as we come to you.
- [7 : 23] We want to lift up our praises. Because you are a God who is worthy to be praised. Your name must be glorified. Lord in every nation.
- And in this nation. And so Lord we look to do that this morning. And we pray as we meet. We pray oh Lord that you would come and that you would meet with us. That is our earnest desire this morning.
- We don't want to just come into this church building. Just to come and to go. Because it is what we do on a Sunday. Lord we want to come and we want to meet with you.
- We want to know a sense of your presence here amongst us. And Lord as we turn to your word later on. We long that you would come and that you would speak to us.
- Because we will not be satisfied unless you will do such a thing Lord. And so we look to you this morning. And we pray that you would come and meet with us oh Lord.
- [8 : 21] And again we give thanks to you that you are a glorious and a mighty God. And we want to glorify your name this morning. And so we pray in your precious name oh Lord.
- Amen. Amen. Well it is good to be with you again this morning. Just to say something of who I am. I am Jeff and I work with the Faith Mission.
- Just recently started working with the Faith Mission in August. Me and my wife. I am married to my wife Sarah. I have six children. And we wore down in Stranrar. I was working as a farm manager.
- But two years ago I came into the Bible College. And I have been studying at the Faith Mission Bible College. And then in August we joined the Faith Mission. And somehow I do not know who I rubbed up the wrong way.
- But I have been handed the task of working with Donnie. And taking over his role later on in March. So I do not know what I did wrong to have that come upon me.
- [9 : 20] But it really is great to be with you this morning. And we are just thrilled that you have us along this morning and this evening. And again just to say about the fellowship after.

It would be great to see you along if you could stay on for that. Donnie will be sharing something of what we have been doing over the last wee while with the Faith Mission. And I will be sharing something of my testimony of how I became, how I saved.

And a little bit of the story of how I went from being a farm manager in a job that I loved. To giving that up and to coming to Bible College. So it would really be great to see you along this evening.

And again just to say we thank you so much for your support here. And for your prayers for us. We really do value that. We know very much that if it wasn't for the prayers of people like yourself.

That we really could do nothing. As we look to take the gospel out into the Highland area. Well I want to bring something of a children's word this morning.

[10 : 22] And I think do the children come down to the front. Is that right? Well if you want to come on down now. And we'll just have a. I'll just bring something.

It's good to see so many of you this morning. And this morning I want to bring to you something about a pencil.

And I'm sure you're all familiar with a pencil. Well maybe you're not so familiar these days. Do you still use pencils at school? Yes you do. Because I know some of my children sometimes they get handed an iPad.

But we still use pencils. And I just want. There's a lesson that we can learn. I want to learn five things about this pencil. And what is it that makes a pencil a pencil?

What makes a pencil a pencil? Can you tell me anybody? The ink. Well not quite the ink. But what is the thing inside it? The lead.

[11 : 22] That's what makes a pencil a pencil. You see if it was just no lead in it. It would just be a piece of wood. It wouldn't be a pencil. It needs to have the lead inside it.

And that is the first lesson that a pencil teaches us what it is to be a Christian. You see if there was no lead in the pencil it wouldn't be a pencil. And that's the same of a Christian.

See a Christian has something inside them. A Christian has the Holy Spirit inside them. Whenever we come and we confess our sin to God. And we ask him to forgive us of our sin.

And he cleanses us and forgives us of our sin. The Bible says that he makes us into a new creature. And he puts the Holy Spirit within us. So that we have God living in ourselves.

And that is what makes a Christian a Christian. They have God within them. Well what about the second thing that we learn from a pencil?

[12 : 23] Whenever you take the pencil in your hand and you put it down on a piece of paper what does it do? It writes. Or maybe if you are drawing a picture. It draws a beautiful picture.

And some people can do brilliant things with a pencil. They can draw lovely pictures. But whenever you put it on the paper it leaves a mark. And again that is like the Christian.

You see the Christian should leave a mark. And what do I mean by that? Wherever they go should you be able to see where a Christian has been? Not quite. But the Christian should leave a mark in a way that whenever we look at someone who is born again.

We should see something different about them. Whenever people look at their lives they should see that that person is different. They don't use the same language as other people.

They don't do some of the same things as other people. There is something different about them. And that is because whenever God comes into our lives he changes us. He changes us. And he makes us different.

[13 : 24] And as people see the way that we live. The way that we speak. The things they do. They realise there is something different about us. And so we should leave a mark upon others.

As we live for Christ. And then the next thing about the pencil. What has this pencil got on the top of it? Can you see? Yes you have a mark there. A rubber. And if you are anything like what I was when I was at school.

You will be using this rubber a lot. Firstly you will be using it to rub out your mistakes. Or you will be chewing on the end of it. But that is what happens sometimes. Whenever you are maybe right and you make a mistake.

And you can just take the rubber and you can rub it out. And the mistake is gone. And you know sometimes as Christians we make mistakes. We get things wrong.

Sometimes we do things that we shouldn't have done. That is the great thing. As a Christian we can come back to God. And we can confess our sin. We can say look God I have got it wrong.

[14 : 23] I am sorry. And God will erase our sin from us. And then the next thing about a pencil. What needs to happen for a pencil to be any use?

Look at this here pencil. What do you notice about it? It is sharp. And you will know if you use a pencil that sometimes it gets blunt. And you need to get your pencil sharpener and sharpen it.

And again that is like a Christian. You see life is not always easy. And sometimes you know difficult things happen. And maybe you know that when you are at school.

Maybe people will make fun of you. Or come along to church. Or going along to the youth group. You know. And sometimes it is not easy. But you know. God says that sometimes we go through difficult situations.

That it might be like a pencil being sharpened. So that as we face these difficult things. We might come to God. And we might come closer to him. And be more reliant upon him.

[15 : 24] Why? So that he might sharpen us. That he might keep us close to him. And that we might continue to be useful to him. And then the last thing is about the pencil. And this is the most important thing.

What is the most important thing that pencil needs to happen? If I left the pencil there would it be any good? It wouldn't be any good. It would just be sitting there.

What needs to happen for that pencil to be any good? Yeah? For it to be useful. What needs to happen? Use it. Use it. Use it.

You have to pick it up and put it in your hand. And it is only when it is in the hand. That the pencil is any use. And that is the last thing I want to share with you.

It is only when the Christian. It is only when we. Allow ourselves to be placed in God's hand. That we can be of any use. To God. Just as the pencil.

[16 : 21] Freely sits in the hand of the holder. And can be used. So we must allow ourselves to be in God's hand. That we would say. You know God. I want to live my life for you. I want to do what you would have to do.

So that we might be in his hand. And that we might be used by him. Okay? So there's five things. Next time you see a pencil. Maybe you'll remember those five things.

And you can remember how that relates to the life of a Christian. Okay? So I don't know. Do you go back to your seats now? Do you? Or do you just stay there? Stay there. Well that's good.

It's good that you're there to keep me right. Because I'd be completely lost otherwise. Well we're going to sing another item of praise. We're going to sing. To God be the glory. And again we'll stand to sing this hymn.

Thank you. Our name is Zalia.

[17 : 34] When the life came that all may go in Praise the Lord, praise the Lord Let the earth hear his voice Praise the Lord, praise the Lord Let the people rejoice O come to the Father through Jesus the Son And give him the glory, great things he has done O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood To every believer, the promise of God The vilest offender who truly believes That moment on Jesus, a pardon receives Praise the Lord, praise the Lord Let the earth hear his voice

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord Let the people rejoice O come to the Father through Jesus the Son And give him the glory, great things he has done Great things he has taught us, great things he has done And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son But purer and higher and greater will be Our wonder, our transport when Jesus we see Praise the Lord, praise the Lord Let the earth hear his voice Praise the Lord, praise the Lord Let the people rejoice O come to the Father through Jesus the Son

And give him the glory, great things he has done There's the Exodus going out there Summer Mount It's great to see so many children in the service this morning Well I want to just have our Bible reading now I'm going to be reading from Jonah So the book of Jonah So if you find Daniel and keep going Past Hosea and then Joel, Amos, Obadiah

You'll come to Jonah If you get to Micah you've gone one too far There it is up on the screen, it's even better And Jonah chapter 3 verse 1 And it says Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time Saying, Arise Go to Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city And call out against it the message that I tell you So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh According to the word of the Lord Now Nineveh was exceedingly great city Three days journey in breadth Jonah began to go into the city Go in a day's journey And he called out Yet forty days And Nineveh shall be overthrown And the people of Nineveh believed God They called out for a fast And put on sackcloth From the greatest of them To the least of them The word reached the king of Nineveh And he arose from his throne Removed his robe Who covered himself with sackcloth And sat in ashes

And he issued a proclamation And published through Nineveh By the decree of the king and his nobles Let neither man nor beast Herd nor flock Taste anything Let them not feed or drink water But let man and beast Be covered with sackcloth And let them call out mightily to God Let everyone turn from his evil way And from the violence that is in his hands Who knows God may return and relent And turn from his fierce anger So that we may not perish And God saw what they did How they turned from their evil way God relented of the disaster That he said he would do to them And he did not do it Amen Just a word of prayer This morning Just want to pray For some of the things Going on in our nation And here Locally Let's pray

[22 : 41] Dear Heavenly Father We do thank you for your word This morning We thank you that As we read this account of Jonah That this is not just some Story That has been made up But it is a true history It is a true act of God That you worked all those years ago And so we thank you As we come to your word That we know it to be true And Lord Again we just come to you Giving our thanks to you We thank you that we can sing To God be the glory Great things he hath done Thank you that we can Sing that personally In our own lives this morning Those of us who know What it is to have been Saved Lord Those of us who know What it is to have Be brought from darkness Into light From death Into life That we can say God has done a great thing In our life

That we were lost We were wandering We were far from the fold God has Stepped down in his mercy And has saved us And so we do thank you For that this morning Oh Lord Lord we pray For the need Of our land We think of many Lord Who do not know you We see the state Of our land And in many ways We see What we've been reading Here in Nineveh How everybody was In their own evil way And there was a great Evil amongst the city Lord We could say that Here of our own Nation Lord There is a great evil And there is many Who have no concern For the things of God Lord we just pray Just as you showed Mercy to that city In Nineveh Lord we pray That you would show Mercy to our country Pray that you would Show mercy to our land Pray Lord

That from the Greatest to the least You might come And pour out your spirit And cause people to see Their need for you That they might say Call out mightily To God And that you would Show mercy And grace To us Lord That you might Restore this land Again to yourself And Lord We want to pray This morning For the needs Of some In the congregation We think of Neil here Lord Who has been Taken into hospital And is In Dundee I believe I pray that you Be with him This morning Pray that As the doctors Would assess him And look over His case That you would Just come to them And give them Wisdom That they Would just know The right action To take And Lord We pray That you would Just come upon Him And bring

Your healing Hand upon Him We pray That he might Just even know As he's in The hospital This morning We pray That you would Even just Meet with him In that hospital This morning That he might Just know A sense Of the presence Of God With him And that he Would just Be confident That he is In the Lord's Hands And that the Lord goes Before him And Lord We pray For others This morning Who are Sick or Unwell And who are Not able To make Make it out Lord Lord I don't Know their Names But you Know them Lord Pray that You be With them Maybe some Of them Listening online This morning We pray As they do So in their Own homes That you Would meet With them And that They too Would know A sense Of the presence Of God In their Home And Lord We just Also want To pray For those Up in Park Free Church This morning We just Pray that As they Meet And as They have Communion Lord we do Pray that You would Meet with Them We pray This morning Might be

A special Morning There That they Too would Know the Presence Of God Amongst Them And that As they Partake Lord In that Communion Lord That they Would just Know A closeness To God And so We pray That you Would Undertake Lord Lord Again We look To you We pray That you Would come And meet With us This morning And that We would Know you Ministering Into our Hearts Lord That we Might hear The still Small voice Of God This morning Speaking to Us We do Pray in Your Precious Name Amen Well Before we Come to The word Of God We're Just Going to Sing Our Gaelic Psalm Psalm 85 Verses 6 To 7 8

[27 : 45] Nant ni workforce, hir ndar, qui est la pañita. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[30 : 19] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. we thank you that your word is sharper than a two-edged sword when it cuts through the bone and through the heart Lord and we pray this morning as we look to your word that you would do that Lord that you would cut to our hearts this morning so help us we pray in your precious name Amen well I'm sure you've heard plenty of people talking about the good old days how things were always better and things were always easier and life was just always good in the good old days if you've maybe some grandparents or you probably often I remember sitting down in front of my granddad's feet and often he would talk about the good old days and maybe they were good old days and I'm sure whenever I get older that these days will be good old days as well but one of the things that I sort of have in my mind as we come to this passage is

[32 : 33] I think sometimes we're prone to do that in Christian circles and in the church I think lately we may be prone to do that it's one thing I've found as I've been going around people I suppose it's natural in a way but they talk about the good old days when the church was thriving when they knew special times of God coming down and sometimes I feel that we've almost got in a way that that was back then and it's not really anymore that we're living in something of the ice age of Christianity and recently I was doing a study through Jonah for different reasons and this really spoke to me really challenged me is that the sentiment that I have or do I really believe that as God has worked in the past as God worked in Nineveh could he come and do something in our day that we're not just looking back to the good old days but we're looking to this day and that God would come and do something this day and so that's been a challenge to my heart and I just want to share something of that this morning and as we come to this passage we see something of a revival happening in Nineveh a remarkable thing and I just want to look at three things from this passage

I just want to look at the message of the revival I want to look at the messenger of the revival firstly then the message of revival and then the outpouring of revival and as we pick up in chapter 3 we see here Jonah at the end of chapter 2 verse 10 it says and the Lord spoke to the fish and vomited Jonah out upon the dry ground upon the dry land and you can just almost imagine Jonah here on this beach somewhere in the Mediterranean just finding himself probably soaking wet stinking of fish covered in who knows what and you know if we would find ourselves in that situation we would probably be thinking what on earth has happened to me but I think as Jonah was sitting there on that beach he was probably just over the moon he was probably just thrilled why?

because God had come to him and God had saved him and God had dealt with him in the belly of that fish and God had restored him to himself we all know the story of Jonah in chapter 1 he's fleeing God then he's thrown over in the storm and he's in the belly of the fish and it's there that God restores him back to himself and so I believe that as Jonah's here in this situation that he would have just been thrilled there would have been a newness in Jonah's life a change a closeness to God again and now that he's been restored to God and now that he has been recommitted himself to God it's then that we read in chapter 3 verse 1 then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time it came to him a second time and you know this is just I just love this just the word the second time you know that that God is just such a gracious God he never gives up on us here's Jonah he'd ran and he'd fled and yet God comes to him again graciously a second time you know if it was us if somebody had failed us and abused our trust you know we might have been we might be willing to forgive them but I don't think we'd ever be willing to restore them to that position of trust again but here's God so gracious he doesn't neglect Jonah but again he picks Jonah up and again he uses Jonah and again the word of the Lord comes to him and now as the word comes to him a second time he can be used of God and he can be used in ways that

Jonah could never imagine we see that he is to go on and to be this messenger of revival but what is it that prepared Jonah to be used by God in such a way and I think maybe there's three things that has prepared Jonah to be used in this way it says then the word of the Lord came to Jonah it was then as he was sitting on that beach and washed up that the word of the Lord comes to him then and why was it that it came to him then I believe it's because Jonah had been broken you see God had stripped him of everything and brought him to rock bottom you see that in chapter 2 as you read through it if you read through that you just here's Jonah he's brought to that place where he's just crying out to God crying out for forgiveness and God comes and meets him and forgives him and you know you just see a completely changed man in the beginning of chapter 1 you see

Jonah is just stubborn he's not wanting to do what God does he wants to do what he wants to do and almost he's a non-conscience when he runs from God and he's on the boat and you know he's just fled from God in disobedience and where do you find him sleeping in the hull of the boat in the bottom of the boat you know and it's obvious that he's not no regrets for what he's just done his conscience his conscience is numb but now God has dealt with him now God has caused him to be thrown overboard to the point where he thought he was going to the depths of the ocean where he was going to his death and now he's known what it is for God to come in and to save him and so he's been brought to a point of brokenness where he sees he sees his own sinfulness he sees how he's rejected God but he also sees a fresh God's grace and how God has shown mercy to him and you see before God ever worked a revival in Nineveh he came and worked a revival in Jonah's own heart and in Jonah's own life and along with this brokenness there's a surrender you see

[39 : 18] Jonah's brought in this brokenness to the point of surrender it says in verse 2 the Lord says to him arise and go to Nineveh and then we read in verse 3 so Jonah arose now that he's been stripped of everything now that he sees all that God has done for him afresh Jonah's brought to this point where he says yes Lord whatever you will do whatever you ask of me I will do it he's been brought to a place of surrender you know in the New Testament we read of Jesus and he refers in Matthew chapter 11 he refers to Jonah he talks about the sign of Jonah and he says that just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days so that Christ would die and be buried for three days but then he would rise again but he had to die first that when he would that then when he would rise that then he could bring through the resurrection a new life a new hope and in the same way this is something similar has happened to Jonah in the belly of this fish in a spiritual sense as Jonah has been in the belly of that fish he's had to die die to himself he's had to to put to death his desires and his will and what he wanted to do and he's had to be brought to that place where he said you know Lord yes it's not what I want but it's what you want brought to that point where he's willing to do whatever

God would ask him you know as he as he goes to Nineveh this would not be an easy message to take to Nineveh here's an evil city that's caught up in great wickedness and now God's calling him a foreigner to go to these people and to preach a message of judgment to them and you know you can just imagine what would be going through Jonah's mind what are these people going to say to me what are they going to do to me he's probably terrified that they're going to chase him out of the city maybe even stone him that he'd be ridiculed and rejected but Jonah's been brought to that point of brokenness and surrender that he says you know Lord it doesn't matter what they do I'm willing to go for you and you know I think this has to come to ourselves as we look at this messenger of revival often we might say we long to see something of revival we long to see

God working again in our communities but God has to come to us first the revival began in Jonah's heart and it must begin in our heart if we want to see God working in our families if we want to see God working in our communities and in our church then there needs to be a brokenness in our own life there needs to be a surrenderedness in our own life the Lord cannot use us unless we're surrendered to him it was only when Jonah surrendered that the Lord could use him in chapter 1 he couldn't be used but in chapter 3 he could be used and where are we this morning you know Jesus says in Mark chapter 8 he says for whoever would save his life will lose it but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it and this morning

I want to challenge you this morning are you willing to lose your life for Christ's sake and the gospels are you willing to say whatever it takes Lord it doesn't matter what my colleagues at work will say to me it doesn't matter what my family will think of me it doesn't matter where you call me to go or what you call me to do but I'll do it for you Lord because I have lost my life to Christ because of what he has done for me and it was only in that point of surrender that Jonah was able to use the third thing that we see that allowed Jonah to be used was that he was burdened you know whenever whenever Jonah was in the belly of the fish when you read through chapter 2 you can clearly see that Jonah thought that he was as he plummeted to the depths of the ocean he thought that he was going to his death he thought he was growing to his grave it says in chapter 2 verse 6

Jonah says you brought my life from the pit and the Old Testament when it talks of the pit it's talking about hell it's talking about that place of Sheol and so Jonah has been given a new vision before his eyes a new glimpse of eternity he realises that life is a fragile thing he realises that this life is not what we have but what is important is what waits us and that is eternity this life is temporary and what is important is our eternal destination and so he's burdened and he's given this message of judgment it says in verse 4 he goes and he calls out yet 40 days and Nineveh shall be overthrown that word that is used for overthrown is the same word that is used in Genesis for the destruction of Sodom and

[45 : 15] Gomorrah and Jonah sees that this is an urgent message that Nineveh is going to be destroyed that these people are going to face judgment and so it says in verse 4 that he called out or the King James says that he cried out this message he goes passionately pleading with them saying you must turn do you not see what's coming you face eternal judgment you're not ready to go into eternity and so he pleads with these people he's burdened for them because he realizes what they're about to face and again I want to challenge us this morning you know often we long that God would do something and often we long to see people saved but do we really long for that are we really burdened for people often we pray for a vision of heaven you know something and I've been really challenged by this

I think what we need is a vision of hell I think if we just got one glimpse into hell then we would never stop persuading looking to persuade our family and our friends of the great judgment that awaits them we would plead with them every day and are we truly burdened for those around us do we really see what hangs in the balance for those that are without Christ and are we burdened that they might hear this wonderful message of grace that we have to share with them so we see that Jonah was he was broken he was surrendered and he was burdened and are we broken surrendered and burdened this morning well secondly we see the message of revival now God has done this fresh work in

Jonah he's ready to go to this great city and it says the Lord says that in verse 3 it says now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city three days journey in breadth and Jonah arise at this great city and Nineveh we know is in modern day Iraq and you can actually go there and you can see the ruins of the city and this has actually brought a number of questions because you know archaeologists if they look at these ruins it's clear to see that they're not three days journey they're not that big it wouldn't take three days to cross them and that's brought up a number of questions well does that mean that what we read here is not true well I would say that no that's not the case and there could be two solutions to that the first could be that you know as Jonah went across the city it could have took him three days as he went and as he preached it could have took him three days to do that but I believe that possibly the answer that I feel is right is that it's more likely that whenever it's talking about here about

Nineveh it's not just talking about the city as in the city walls but it's talking about the surrounding area as in you know you talk about Nineveh you talk about the city and the dwellings and the fields that surrounded it and it would have took Jonah three days that area was 60 miles and so it would have took him three days to journey across this area and it's clear that this was a great city it says in chapter 4 verse 11 there was 120,000 people in this city the commentators tell us that Samaria that was certainly larger than Jerusalem that's the northern capital of Israel it had a population of 30,000 and it was considered a great city and so we see this city of 120,000 and you can just picture Jonah going through this city and as he comes to it this wicked city you can just imagine his knees knocking and him trembling as he looks to take this message what is it about this message what is it that's so special that caused a whole city to turn in repentance well firstly we see that it's God's message verse 2 says arise go to

Nineveh that great city and call out against it the message that I tell you what was special about this message that Jonah brought well ultimately there was nothing special about it you know Jonah didn't go with a of an agenda of a month planned of meetings with special testimonies and singing he didn't look up he didn't look to set up a Christianity explored course he just simply went with God's message and that's what was special about it because it was God's message Jonah didn't go with his own agenda he just went bearing God's message he didn't try to add to it thinking no this is too simple I need to add something to it he didn't he didn't try to detract from it thinking no this is too harsh this message of judgment I can't just go and proclaim this he just simply went bearing God's message and the message is one of judgment it wouldn't have been an easy one for Jonah to bring it wouldn't have been welcomed with open arms but that didn't worry Jonah he just simply went and he faithfully preached God's word you know the charge that

[51 : 26] Paul gives to Timothy in 2nd Timothy chapter 4 verse 1 where he says to preach the word in season and out of season that was true of Jonah and he faithfully takes this message and it is his faithfulness in taking this simple message of God that is key to what happens and you know just in the same way we've been given a message as message from God if you if in 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 Paul talks there he says three times about how we've been given this this message of reconciliation from God this message of reconciliation of how it is that this world that we who have sinned and who are enemies of God can be restored into a relationship with God again how we can have our sins forgiven and this is the message that that we have been given to take to those who are out there who are lost and what does

Paul says he says in 2nd Corinthians verse 5 19 says in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation therefore we are ambassadors for Christ God making his appeal for us and just as and what is what is Paul's response to that in light of that message what does he say he says we implore you on behalf of Christ be reconciled to God and we've been entrusted with this gospel message just as Jonah was given God's message so we have been entrusted to take this message not to add to it not to detract from it but to simply just take it and as Jonah went and as he preached I believe he would have preached with his with his heart and John Owen says that the word can only come with power to our hearers when it has come with power to our own hearts and as that gospel message come with power to our hearts this morning maybe once it was but maybe now it's we've become complacent to it maybe we've become cold to it you know Paul says whenever he hears that we're ambassadors of Christ what does he say he says to those around him we implore you on behalf of Christ be reconciled to God implore you plead with you we earnestly long that you would come and turn to

Christ when was the last time we took the gospel message to someone like that when was the last time that we implored someone that we said you know we've got this great news this gospel message and I long that you would hear it because it's a matter of life and death you must hear it and you know unless it is spoken to our hearts unless this message is upon our heart we can't expect for it to have a power or to have an effect on anybody else's heart we also see that the message that Jonah took was simple he says yet 40 days and never will be overthrown just a simple message and you know often we might be prone to think this message is too simple how could such a simple message have stirred such a working of God but I think often the message is simple

I know in my own testimony I was only saved at the young age of five and it was just my mum simply explaining the gospel message I came to realise my need for Christ and you know you often hear of other people testifying to that sometimes it was just a text just a sentence in a sermon even just a question from a friend that brought conviction upon them there was such an occasion in the Older Revival in 1859 there was a young boy and he was at school and he came under conviction and he was so troubled that he couldn't work anymore and the teacher seen how this was affecting him and the teacher was a Christian man and so he says to one of the other students who was a Christian he says take this young boy home and so they go home and on their way home they see an empty house and so they decide that they'll go into this empty house and to pray together and it's whilst they're in that house that the young boy who's under conviction he gets he is saved and so they decide not to go home but to go back to the classroom and as they go back to the classroom he tells the teacher of what happens and he just gives this simple message he says

I am so happy I have the Lord Jesus in my heart I'm so happy I have the Lord Jesus in my heart just a simple testimony and you know it was just that simple testimony that came in a powerful way all of a sudden other classmates came under conviction and they had to leave the classroom one by one and go and find areas in the playground where they were praying and crying to God for mercy and then it spread to other classrooms and to other teachers and soon the teacher had to send for the local ministers and you know the ministers were there to 11 o'clock at night ministering to people all because that one boy's simple testimony and that's often what happens God just comes simply and causes us to understand the word and it works in power well lastly and time is gone so I'll just be brief as we look at the outpouring of revival we've seen the messenger we've seen the message and as these things come together we see this powerful outpouring of the spirit we see this amazing statement in verse 5 and the people of Nineveh believed God and the people heard Jonah but they believed God and this is what happens whenever we see the spirit of

[58 : 23] God being poured out and working it's God that speaks to the hearts and soul of men it's God that brings them under conviction and it's in God that they believe the spirit of God brings and brought illumination and caused them to believe God to believe his word and this sees a radical response they called to put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them just picture it the scene as Jonah goes through Nineveh and as he preaches this word maybe ones and twos are starting to come into believe and then maybe fives and tens and then all of a sudden there's pockets and neighbourhoods in the community that are calling out to God maybe it starts with the women down at the well and then the rich men in the market and then the slaves out in the field and they come under conviction and they start to cry out to God all because they believed

God they believed God and this has been really spoken to me do we believe God today do we believe that God could come and do something again do we even believe that God could save the members of our family really believe it do we believe that he could save our colleagues at work our children our grandchildren or do we think we're in the ice age of Christianity that was the good old days you know God came in mighty ways back then but but not now do we still believe that God could come and do something like this or maybe here you're this morning here and maybe you've never trusted in Christ maybe you've never known your sins forgiven maybe you're not saved

I want to encourage you simply just to believe just to believe God that's what these people did they just heard the word of God and they simply believed they came under conviction they repented would you just simply believe God this morning and we see how this this how God works and how he comes in a powerful way to the extent that even the highest official in the land comes on conviction and looks to turn to God and he makes this great declaration that everybody should fast and should be covered with sackcloth and ashes and it just shows the power of God you know and there was great conviction they put on sackcloth and ashes this was a humiliating thing you know sackcloth only the poorest of the poor wore sackcloth and here's the highest in the land putting it on the ashes represents their mourning they were grieved of the evil that they had been doing we see their repentance the king says that everyone turned from their evil way and God came in such a way that he causes them to turn from their evil that even you know it says that about the man and the beast and the herd and the flock that they should turn from their evil way but yet we also see faith you know it says in verse 8 the king says call out mightily to God they had faith you know they believed that maybe they had faith that if they repented and if they called on God then maybe he would just show maybe he would show mercy and they had they had faith and what do we see in verse 10 when God saw what they did how they turned from their evil way

God relented of the disaster that he said he would do to them and he did not do it he turned and he did not do it isn't that just amazing reminds me of a verse in Ephesians chapter 2 it says and we all once lived in the passions of our flesh crying out the carrying out the desires of the body and the mind and by and we were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind but God but God been rich in mercy because of his great love of which he loved us even when we were dead in our trespasses he made us alive in Christ by grace you have been saved by grace you have been saved by grace you have been saved and so do we believe that this morning do we believe that God could come and do a mighty work in our land maybe you need to come and simply hear those words by grace you have been saved and come to God for the first time and believe that his word is true maybe you've grown cold and maybe you're weary maybe like

Joni you need revival to come to your heart maybe you need to go home today and just get before God and say Lord I'm not where I ought to be I'm not burdened for my family my friends as I ought to be would you come and remove this heart of stone and give me a heart of flesh do we believe that God can work in our land and in our church and in our community well we're going to close by singing search me oh God and know my heart today and know my thoughts I pray and see if there be some wicked way in me and cleanse me from every sin and set me free this is something of a prayerful hymn and maybe as we close our service we could stand and sing this song prayerfully in response to God's word let's stand to sing together oh holding me oh

[65 : 30] God, I know my heart today. Drive me, O Lord, and know my thoughts, I pray.

See if there be some wicked way in me. Cleanse me from every sin and set me free.

I praise Thee, Lord, for cleansing me from sin. Fulfill Thy word and make me pure within.

Fill me with fire where once I burned with shame. Grant my desire to magnify Thy name.

Lord, take my life and make it holy Thine. Fill my pure heart with Thy great love divine.

[67 : 08] Take all my will, my passion, self, and pride. Now I surrender, Lord, in me abide.

O Holy Ghost, revival comes from Thee. Send the revival, start the work in me.

Thy word declares, Thou wilt supply our need. For blessing now, O Lord, I humbly plead.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You this morning for the words but God. Lord, we thank You, Lord, that You did not leave us in our sin. We thank You that You loved us and You showed Your great love to us and sending Your Son to us.

That by grace we could be saved. And so, Lord, we thank You for that this morning. And we pray that we would have been challenged by Your word. We pray, Lord, if we are cold and weary or far from You this morning, that You would come and You would restore us again to You.

[68 : 44] That the fire of revival would burn in our own heart, O Lord. Lord, I pray if there is anybody here this morning who has not yet called out to You for the forgiveness of sin.

That You would come and cause them to simply see the truth of Your message. And that they would believe God this morning.

And so, Father, we thank You this morning. We pray that You would be with us now. And that You would keep us until we meet again this evening.

And we pray in Your precious name. Amen.